

## **Notes from the December 2020 meeting of the Hamilton, NY, Town Board (12.10.20)**

The December regular meeting of the Town Board, held via Zoom, opened with public comment and a discussion of the Town's purchase of a parcel of land in Hubbardsville bordering the Nine Mile Swamp. The Town purchased the land from an estate to assure public access to the Swamp. Supervisor Eve Ann Shwartz said that the management of the property will be the topic for discussion at future meetings.

Chris Rossi updated the Board on the zoning update committee's review of a proposed noise law. The Climate Preparedness Working Group, she said, is working on a climate action plan for the village and town. The consultant who is advising on that plan is paid through a grant.

Highway Superintendent Luke Dowsland detailed work done by his crew over the past month. The crew has been reducing expenditures by doing their own maintenance and repair work on Town vehicles whenever possible. In another cost-saving measure, the crew has been producing in-house the brine used to treat Town roads in winter.

Brynley Wilcox reported that revenues for both sales taxes and mortgage taxes are running ahead of taxes received in 2019. Sales taxes received to date total nearly \$448,000 against a budget of \$414,000; mortgage taxes year to date are \$36,000 against a budget of \$25,000.

As usual during the holidays, traffic has slowed at the Town Office. Due to the surge in coronavirus cases, business at the office will be conducted curbside or by appointment until further notice. The office will be closed from Christmas through New Year's Day, though the phone will be monitored daily for special requests.

The Board approved biannual appointments of the Court Clerks (Sandra Crumb and Dorothy Janczyk), and of the Registrar and Deputy Registrar (Suzanne Reymers and Elisa Robertson).

Peter Darby, liaison with SOMAC, briefed the Board on plans to organize fundraising for a new vehicle. Unanticipated revenues during the pandemic had a positive impact on SOMAC's budget, and having the Town crew service and maintain vehicles was also a cost saving. The ambulance corps is considering outfitting an adjacent building to provide sleeping quarters for volunteers who staff the service overnight.

The Earlville for Earlville project expects to receive a report this month from Design Connect, the Cornell-based team that is making recommendations for improvements to the park. The report will be the basis for fundraising and future planning.

Spiking cases of coronavirus are having an impact across the county. The Town Highway department plans to coordinate with neighboring towns and the Madison County Highway Dept to provide mutual aid in the event that snow removal is hampered by employees who test positive for the virus.

The next monthly meeting of the Town Board is scheduled January 14 at 6:30p.m., via Zoom. Contact the Town Clerk (315-824-3380) for details.

*Reported for the Town Board by Jim Leach*